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has placed all students of Plato under obligation, and has produced what will doubtless for many years to come be the standard annotated edition of the *Laws*.

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A Study of the Impersonal Passive of the Ventum Est Type. By ALICE ANNA DECKMAN. A thesis presented to the faculty of the graduate school of the University of Pennsylvania in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy. Philadelphia, Pa., 1920.

This study is based upon "those authors of the republican period of whom we have works or portions of works preserved substantially entire." The problem is rather narrowly limited to a consideration of the question whether impersonal passives of the type under discussion do or do not imply an actor more specific than "people" or the indefinite "one."

The material collected shows very conclusively that there is some danger that a student may gather a wrong impression from statements in certain grammars, where *curritur* is rendered "they or people run," *vivitur*, "people live," etc. As a matter of fact, it is demonstrated that impersonal expressions of this sort are used much more frequently in describing specific acts than in the expression of general truths.

The dissertation goes little beyond the demonstration of this single fact. In presenting her material, the author attempts to classify according to person and number of an implied agent, beginning with the first person singular. This subdivision is not essential to the main thesis, and it can hardly be made as clear-cut as Miss Deckman would have it.

For example, the first case cited under "actor definite in the second person singular," is Plautus, *Amph.* 100: *numquam factum est*. The scene is the one wherein *Amphitruo* appears at his home shortly after the departure of *Jupiter* and *Mercury*. *Alcmene*, who has not penetrated the disguise of the gods, naturally is surprised at what she considers her husband's quick return; and she declares that she has just seen him. *Amphitruo's* reply *numquam factum est* is taken to mean *numquam fecisti*, i.e., "you never saw me (and *Sosia*) here."

But an argument equally strong could be made out for an implied agent in the first person. Thus, looking backward in the text, it

will be seen that when Alcmena insists that her husband has recently visited her, he inquires: *quam dudum istuc factum est?* (692). When taxed with romancing, she declares: *quod factum est fabulor*. And when she appeals to the evidence of her own sight, specifying time and place, what more natural than that Amphitruo should enter a disclaimer in the words: *numquam factum est*, the implied agent being in the first person?

Again, it seems too mechanical and untrue to language feeling to insist that, in an author like Caesar, every example with implied specific agent can be classified as singular or plural in application. Of course, Caesar is usually accompanied by troops, yet he refers to his movements very frequently in the singular (e. g. *Caesar venit*). Hence the fact that he is traveling in company does not necessarily prove that the impersonal *perventum est* is meant to imply a plural agent.

Indeed, it is questioned whether the attempt to construct out of the context a logical scaffolding to show agency relation is not often foreign to the real function of the Latin phrase. Thus, if we should say of the progress of a party of travelers toward a certain town: *sub noctem ad urbem perventum est*, this would mean little more than: "Toward nightfall the town was reached." Of course, reached by the travelers; but that sort of analysis seems a bit pedantic.

Or, reverting to the Plautine example above cited, one wonders just how clearly agency is felt with the words *numquam factum est* are used as a disclaimer. It is easy to think of the phrase as occurring in situations where it would stress the agency notion almost as little as is the case with the colloquial "Nothing doing." And how should we classify an example like: *de collo meo actum est?*

The undue stress which this dissertation lays upon everywhere identifying the agent helps to emphasize the general conclusion that impersonals of the *ventum est* type are in only a minority of cases so broad in application as to call for the translation "one runs," "people live," etc. But such mechanical analysis must not blind us to the fact that further study of this rich material might be made to yield additional results well worth while.

Another case in point is the use of forms like *curabitur*, which Miss Deckman ascribes to the desire of the poet to relieve the monotony incident to the succession of first singular forms. But there certainly is room for question whether *curabo* and *curabitur* are exact

synonyms; and probably not every one would be willing offhand to vouch for the exactness of the ratio:

curabo : curabitur :: pugnaverunt : pugnatum est.

Hoping, therefore, that this study will later be expanded and deepened, it may be said of it at present that it provides a needed corrective to the statements found in some handbooks, and that it makes available material that should be very welcome to the teacher of Latin composition and the writer of Latin.

Thus, on pp. 38-39 the list of impersonal expressions found with an expressed agent is interesting; and the Index Locorum offers a conspectus that may be of use to one who is forming his own Latin style. In this connection, it is to be regretted that it was not counted worth while to include the examples gathered from Cicero's works. These were omitted as throwing no additional light on the main thesis.

H. C. N.

La civilisation hellénique. By M. CROISSET. *Les monnaies grecques.* By E. BABELON. *La sculpture grecque.* By H. LECHAT. All in the Collection Payot, Paris, 1921 and 1922.

These little volumes of 160 pages are among a series similar to the Home University Library, and are examples of "la haute vulgarisation" through which French scholars contribute so devotedly to general education the results of their study. We have nothing on these subjects which quite corresponds. The monographs give data not only well-erranged in the light of broad knowledge, but also lighted to attractiveness by fine feeling. M. Croiset covers a vast amount of material in his usual clear and genial fashion, dealing with the social, intellectual, moral, and artistic values of four great periods. M. Babelon's concise descriptions are illustrated by twenty-one outline drawings; unfortunately there is no index. M. Lechat has written a book of the most discriminating taste and suggestive judgments. He brings us to see sculpture as an expression of community aims and purposes; we are led as it were into the very ateliers of the sculptors, and with them face and try to solve the problems of technique, of architectural decoration (e. g., what sort of design is best for metopes?) and of individual expression (the description of the korai is especially intriguing). M. Lechat indulges occasionally in fanciful hypotheses, and his treatment of the hellenistic and even 4th century